

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are all the claims presently pending in this application. Claims 4-6 were previously withdrawn.

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Vinson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,374,324) in view of Bourgois (U.S. Patent No. 4,840,214). In addition, claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Vinson et al. in view of Bourgois, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Edwards (U.S. Patent No. 4,126,720). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections in view of the following remarks.

The previous prior art rejections of claims 1-3 are repeated in this final Office Action. In the last Amendment, Applicant argued that Vinson (as well as the other applied art) is deficient in that it fails to teach or suggest claim 1's recitation of "...integrally coating all cords with an uncured rubber...immediately after the arrangement of these cord units in line." In reply, the Examiner now takes the position (see last paragraph on page 2 and first paragraph on page 5 of the Office Action) that (1) the bead wires 44 in Vinson are arranged immediately before coating by the narrow passageway in the extrusion head/die in Fig. 3, and alternatively (2) the language "immediately after" can be

broadly construed to mean “without any steps between arrangement and coating,” in which case Vinson teaches this.

The Examiner points to Fig. 3, and specifically the right most (upstream) portion of the head 122 in that figure. However, since there is no cross-sectional view of that portion of the head, Applicant respectfully submits that it is impossible to determine from Fig. 3 exactly what is being done to the bead wires 44 as they enter the head. Even if that portion of the head functions to arrange the bead wires 44 in the vertical direction, as appears to be the case given the shape of the opening, claim 1 requires the cords to be arranged “at a given pitch” in the same plane just prior to being coated. It is impossible to determine from Fig. 3 of Vinson whether the head 122 is performing that step recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

As to the Examiner’s alternative argument, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner’s claim interpretation is unduly broad, and inconsistent with the specification. For example, under the Examiner’s construction, the cords could be arranged far upstream of the press rolls (so long as no additional “steps” are performed between the comb roll and the press rolls), notwithstanding that the specification (see page 1, paragraph [0003]) indicates that such a distance makes it difficult to maintain the mutual arrangement of the cords after being coated with rubber.

While it is believed that the Examiner's rejection is without merit, Applicant hereby amends claim 1 to recite that the cord unites are arranged in parallel to each other at a given pitch in the same plane "by passing the cord units through an inserter". As shown and described, the inserter (5) is fixedly secured within an insulator head (4) for applying the uncured rubber to the arranged cord units. See, for example, in Fig. 1B. Also, see Figs. 2A, 2B, and 3.

Bourgois merely discloses a method of bundling plural cords with a reinforcing cord (Figs. 1 and 2). Also, as disclosed in col. 5, lines 48-51, the parts shown in Fig. 5 are formed by slightly rolling the strip of wires 1 (Fig. 3) before entering the rotating axle.

In any case, the present invention is entirely different and patentably distinct from Vinson and/or Bourgois, and could not have been easily conceived therefrom, absent the proscribed use of hindsight.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby earnestly solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, he is

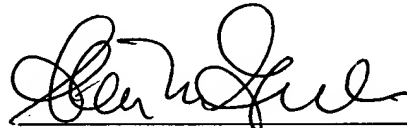
AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.116
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kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees (except the Issue/Publication Fees) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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